

ATHENS (O.)
MESSENGER

Circ.: e. 15,954
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Front Edit Other
Page Page Page

MAY 15 1961

Date:

Plugging The News Holes

President Kennedy recently urged newspaper editors to consider some form of self-censorship in light of cold war threats to national security.

Kennedy did not specify a particular plan.

This request followed a week of turmoil during the abortive invasion of Cuba. Editors across the land were crying to tell their readers exactly what was happening—but they couldn't.

Eventually, piece by piece, an inkling of information trickled out. Even now the full story is locked behind the closed doors of Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings with CIA Chief Allen Dulles and Secretary of State Dean Rusk.

That committee's chairman, Democrat Senator William Fulbright, of Arkansas, put it this way:

"Insofar as I'm concerned, I know all I want to know. The operation as a whole was a mistake for which the White House, the Defense Department, the CIA and the State Department share collective responsibility."

It is unfortunate that the public must decide whom it is to believe, without benefit of "all it needs to know."

Now we find that Fidel Castro's embarrassing victory has compounded U.S. cold war problems. Latin American communists are hurrying to Cuba to learn how Red-bearded Castro defeated "the Yankee pigs."

And new Latin troubles are brewing. Brazil says it opposes foreign meddling in Cuba. It has rejected a U.S. appeal for joint hemisphere action against Castro.

Ecuador's government has also let it be

known that it will not give opposition to the Castro regime.

With this backdrop of disunity, we learn that the United States has been holding survivors of the Cuban rebel invasion force incommunicado on the Caribbean Island of Vieques, a U.S. Marine base.

Every responsible effort by newspapers to visit that island to "get the full story" were blocked by top government officials.

It seems obvious that it is not what is happening in this hemisphere that is a threat to national security. Rather it is what is happening and is being suppressed that is the real danger. A secure nation, as we understand Democracy, is a nation of enlightened citizens. We need only look to Cuba to see what develops when freedom to know is restrained.

Frank Costello, near release from prison, will be deported. His departure will make it possible to say he did at least one good thing for the country.

Senator Kefauver has introduced a bill to place professional boxers under federal policing. Maybe the police could make 'em fight, too.

The Post Office will issue fewer commemorative stamps. But the U.S. has not run out of events and people worth commemorating.

Cuban newspapers blame Kennedy for the seven-million-dollar fire which destroyed a big department store. That's a hot one.